



News

from the ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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HIGHER ED FUNDING COMMISSION HOLDS INAUGURAL MEETING

A Focus on Equity Will Help Determine the Financial Future of Illinois' Public Universities

SPRINGFIELD – Established by state lawmakers, the newly formed [Commission on Equitable Public University Funding](#) met this week to hold an open discussion on how Illinois' public universities are funded. The commission was created by SB 815, co-sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford and Representative Carol Ammons and signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker in August.

"We have an historic opportunity to truly affect change in the state's higher education system and ensure that all students have a chance to achieve their postsecondary goals," **said Illinois Deputy Gov. for Education Martin Torres, a co-chair of the commission.**

The commission includes 33 members whose expertise span the higher education landscape.

"The commission members are all champions for higher education and committed to improving opportunities for Illinois students," **said Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Chair John Atkinson, co-chair of the commission.** "We look forward to working together to put equity at the forefront of our funding decisions."

"This group's work is aligned with the state's new higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth](#), which outlines the need to invest in higher education in a way that is equitable, stable and sufficient, through a set of core principles that will be the foundation of a new funding approach," **said IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro.**

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The commission will recommend at a minimum specific data-driven criteria and approaches to the General Assembly to fund public universities adequately, equitably, and stably in Illinois and to evaluate existing funding methods.

Additionally, the commission must provide a report of its findings to the General Assembly no later than July 1, 2023. The report must include recommendations for an equity-centered funding model to distribute state resources to public universities. In addition to fulfilling the core principles for the new funding approach laid out in A Thriving Illinois, the commission's recommendations must also address specific criteria.

Members of the commission include:

Deputy Gov. for Education Martin Torres, Co-Chair

IBHE Chair John Atkinson, Co-Chair

Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford, Co-Chair

Rep. Carol Ammons, Co-Chair

Sen. Scott Bennett

Sen. Dale Fowler

Sen. Chapin Rose

Rep. Katie Stuart

Rep. Dan Brady

Rep. Mike Marron

Sheila Caldwell, Vice President Anti-Racism, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, SIU

Andreas Cangellaris, Provost, UIUC

Lisa Castillo-Richmond, Executive Director, Partnership for College Completion

Cherita Ellens, President and CEO, Women Employed

Lisa Freeman, President, NIU

Gloria Gibson, President, NEIU

David Glassman, President, EIU

Cheryl Green, President, GSU

Terri Goss Kinzy, President, ISU

Diane Hayes, Professor SIU-E

Guiyou Huang, President, WIU

Brandon Kyle, Student, GSU

Dan Mahony, President, SIU

Ralph Martire, Executive Director, Center for Tax and Budget Accountability

Dennis Papini, UIS

Javier Reyes, Provost, UIC

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Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott, President, CSU

Robin Steans, President, Advance Illinois

Respicio Vasquez, General Counsel, Elgin Community College

Simón Weffer, Associate Professor NIU

Wendi Wills El-Amin, MD, Associate Dean, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, SIU School of Medicine

Jack Wuest, Executive Director, Alternative Schools Network

Eric Zarnikow, Executive Director, Illinois Student Assistance Commission

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